

Appl. No. 09/842,472
Amdt. dated June 28, 2004
Reply to Office Action of 3/25/04

REMARKS

Minor corrections have been made to the specification. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 1-8 remain pending. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application, as amended, are requested.

The Examiner objected to claim 1 because of informalities. The Examiner's comments have been considered and claim 1 has been appropriately amended.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious on consideration of *Kida*.

Kida discloses two embodiments. The first embodiment is representative and is shown in concept in Figure 1. An understanding of the first embodiment can be obtained by considering several passages from the specification. *Kida* states at column 3, lines 27-36 as follows:

The basic functions in the first embodiment of the present invention is largely classified as follows:

1. to manage a work performance schedule for each work
2. to allocate a work to another worker.

First, the item 1 is explained.

Each worker inputs his/her own work data with the work item input/output means 1. In this embodiment, the worker inputs the work data comprising the following items from one to twelve:

Then the specification identifies 12 items which are input by a particular worker to the input/output means 1. At column 4, lines 54-57, it is stated:

The work management means 2 receives the work data input by the worker from the work item input/output means 1 and stores the work data in the work storage means 3 after adding the following items 13 to 16 to the work items.

Thus, item 2 receives the data which have been input by a worker and they can be stored in item 3. At column 6, lines 15-21, it is stated:

The example of storing the work data in the work storage means 3 is shown in FIG. 3. The table is drawn up by adding the above-mentioned items 13 to 16 to FIG. 2. The whole work data stored in the work storage means 3 is called schedule data for the worker.

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The work management means 2 operates for the work storage means 3 as follows:

Then there is some language explaining the operation of work management means 2. Then the specification goes on to discuss work load calculation means 4 at column 6, lines 32-39, as follows:

The work load calculation means 4 calculates the daily work load based on the personal schedule data stored in the work storage means 3. The work load here means the working time on the day required for the worker to complete the work on schedule and more simply means how busy the worker feels. For example, the nine hours of the work load on the day means that the nine-hour work completes the work scheduled to be done today.

Then the specification goes on to indicate how work load is calculated for a particular worker. The calculation includes calculating overtime work hours. After that, the restriction offense detection means 6 is explained at column 7, lines 19-26, as follows:

The restriction offense detection means 6 detects the day when the work schedule restriction is not obeyed from the performance scheduled day list. Concretely, the performance scheduled day (the element of the performance scheduled day list) that meets the conditions below is detected as a restriction offense (the restriction offense performance scheduled day).

Item 6 is then further explained with respect to various restrictions and deadlines for completing particular work. Then, the time chart input/output means 5 is discussed at column 7, lines 60-67, as follows:

The time chart input/output means 5 can change the performance scheduled day for each work. When the performance scheduled day to be changed is clicked with the mouse, the performance schedule is set and clicking again cancels the set schedule. When the user inputs to change the performance scheduled day, the time chart input/output means 5 requests the work management means 2 to update the performance scheduled day list.

The specification goes on to discuss the various items and how they interact and summarizes at column 8, lines 25-36, as follows:

As explained above, while the user inputs the work data by the work item input/output means, the work management means 2 updates the personal schedule data stored in the work storage means 3, the work load calculation means 4 calculates the daily work load, the restriction offense detection means 6 detects the restriction offense performance scheduled day and the work input/output

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means 1 and the time chart input/output means 5 display the restriction offense performance scheduled day to the user. Therefore, the user can input the work item by referring to the schedule restriction offense and the work load displayed by the system.

Thus, as indicated at the very first quote above, the first basic function of this invention is to manage a work performance schedule for each worker by allowing the worker to input data which is received by the work management means and stored in the storage means and such that a calculation as to the daily work load can be made by the work load calculation means and that restrictions on the work can be checked with respect to the restriction offense detection means 6 with everything displayed at the time chart input/output means 5 where changes can be considered.

The second basic function of the invention of *Kida*, as indicated at the first quote above, is "to allocate a work to another worker." The remainder of the disclosure in the specification with respect to the first embodiment discusses a negotiation which takes place between first and second workers to further alter who will do the work and how the data ends up in the management system.

The purpose and use of Applicant's invention is quite different from the disclosure of *Kida*. With reference to Applicant's specification in the "Summary of the Invention," it is stated:

An object of the present invention is to provide a man-hour management system which can analyze man-hours in each individual process unit and between processes. (Page 2, line 26 to page 3, line 2)

...

According to this man-hour management system, the standardized man-hours are set for the constituent works or the conditions of each of the constituent works, and the constituent work items are managed in process units, so that a man-hour analysis can be made between the constituent works within each process or between the processes. Therefore, a process organization loss, etc. can be readily detected, and a plant capability loss, etc. can be relieved in a short time. Moreover, at a model change or at the development of a new car type, a man-hour analysis can be made on the basis of the data of a close car type under the registration management, so that process organization of little loss can be performed in a short term. (Page 3, line 21 to page 4, line 3)

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That is, the purpose of Applicant's man-hour management system is to analyze so that process organization loss can be detected, plant capability loss can be relieved, at model change man-hour analysis can be made between processes, etc. This is in contrast to the *Kida* system of day-to-day management of workers and negotiation of assigning projects between workers.

The purpose of Applicant's invention is reflected in the system of claim 1 which requires a database comprising:

- a walk man-hour conversion table ...
- a work constituent condition table ...
- a standardized man-hour table ...
- a main man-hour management table ...
- a process name table ...

man-hour output means including a man-hour output system program, a timing graph output program, a process balancing table output program, a net & loss aggregation table output program, an individual-process specification aggregation table output program, a history management table output program, and a main man-hour management output program, for outputting man-hour information by being assigned data from said main man-hour management table and said process name table.

Kida disclosed work item input/output means 1, work management means 2, storage means 3, work load calculation means 4, time chart input/output means 5, and restriction offense detection means 6 as shown in Figure 1 and discussed above. These means of *Kida* are not different words for the tables which comprise the architecture of the database of the man-hour management system of claim 1 of Applicant. As indicated, the purposes of *Kida* and of Applicant are different. The database of claim 1 is very different from and does not reflect or depend on or would not be discernable from the various means items of *Kida*. It is not sufficient to say that the database of claim 1 is obvious from *Kida* only because different words are used. The Examiner has not made a prima facie case that claim 1 is obvious in view of *Kida*. Claim 1 is patentable over *Kida*. Likewise, the claims which depend from claim 1 are patentable.

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In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination are requested. Allowance of claims 1-8 at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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